Having the ability to attend the Kentucky Association of Blacks in Higher Education 2015 Annual Conference gave me the ability to investigate and incorporate ways to enhance the diversity of faculty, staff, and students on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University.

I gained knowledge about how to attract, recruit, and retain faculty, staff, and students of color to institutions of higher learning. This is very important to me as a professional staff member at EKU who is working on a daily basis with students who feel marginalized and that there is nothing here for them. It also enabled me to think about future goals with regards to diversity for faculty and staff; this is especially interesting to me because my goal is to be in administration and I am currently pursuing my doctorate.

The sessions enabled me to find creative and positive ways to make my voice heard, to be an advocate for those who feel that a change is necessary in the world of higher learning for survival of the institutions. EKU often does not get the most qualified candidates of color in all areas because they have no one who actually listens to the voices of those who are affected the most. Hopefully, I can take what I have learned from this conference and find an ally who will listen and actually value the information and suggestions that I have to give.

Patti Matthews